

CNN.com
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Lott delays vote on base closing nominee

WASHINGTON (AP) -- A longtime Republican foe of this year's planned closing of military bases is trying to derail the process by blocking Senate confirmation of the head of the commission that helps pick which facilities will be shuttered, congressional aides and lobbyists said Thursday.

Most GOP leaders support closing bases and this latest round likely will go forward. But Sen. Trent Lott, R-Mississippi, a staunch defender of military facilities in his state, has pledged to do whatever it takes to block the closures.

Two weeks ago, the Senate Armed Services Committee approved President Bush's nomination of Anthony Principi, Bush's former secretary of veterans affairs, to be chairman of the commission overseeing the process.

The full Senate was expected to vote on the nomination last month before lawmakers left for a holiday break.

By May 16, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld is supposed to give the commission his list of which military facilities to close in an effort to save money in the Pentagon's annual budget of almost \$500 billion.

But Lott has placed a "hold" on the nomination, said aides and lobbyists speaking on condition of anonymity. The procedural move makes it hard for the Senate to vote on it.

They say Lott is expected to try to delay the confirmation of the other eight nominees once the Senate Armed Services Committee approves them.

Calls this week to Lott's office were not returned.

In February, he told The Associated Press, "I will try to stop it at any point and in any way I possibly can." He says the United States should not be closing domestic bases while its troops are waging war abroad.

Principi said he suspects the reason for the delay was not personal, and noted that some lawmakers simply are concerned about the process going forward.

"I happen to know Senator Lott. We happen to get along," Principi said Thursday.

Without confirmation, Principi cannot put together a staff and build an organization meant to give Rumsfeld's list a thorough, independent review.

"It's been a little bit of a delay," Principi said. "We'll just have to move out a little more aggressively."

The Senate committee is expected to take up the nominations of the other eight committee members in the next few weeks.

Lott has lobbied hard during previous rounds to keep open the Meridian Naval Air Station, the Columbus Air Force Base, and Naval Station Pascagoula. All are major employers in his state and all again could be targeted by the Pentagon.

Last year, Lott and Byron Dorgan, D-North Dakota, proposed delaying the round of domestic base closings until the Pentagon determines what it wants to do with its overseas facilities. The Pentagon and the White House opposed the measure and the Senate defeated it 49-47.

New York Times
April 2, 2005

Bush Sidesteps Lott's Effort To Delay Base Closings

By Eric Schmitt

WASHINGTON, April 1 - In an unusual rebuke of a senior senator from his own party, President Bush announced on Friday that by making recess appointments he had completed creation of a nine-member independent commission to review the Pentagon's list of proposed base closings this year.

Senator Trent Lott, a Mississippi Republican who strongly opposes the coming round of base closings, has been holding up a vote by the full Senate since last month on Mr. Bush's choice to lead the panel, Anthony J. Principi, a former secretary of veterans affairs, senior Republican aides said. Mr. Lott was expected to do the same to the panel's eight other members if the Senate Armed Services Committee approved them, as expected, as early as next week, the aides said.

But Mr. Bush dashed any plan Mr. Lott may have had to stymie the process, a precursor to the first major round of base closings in a decade, by appointing members to the panel while the Senate was in its spring recess, thus eliminating the requirement of Senate confirmation. The appointments expire at the end of the Senate's session next year, long after the panel is scheduled to finish its work.

Congressional and Pentagon officials had feared that Mr. Lott would use Senate procedural tactics to bottle up the nominees and throw the base-closing process far behind schedule.

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld must submit his list of recommended base closings, consolidations and realignments to the commission by May 16. A final roster of cuts and other changes, prepared by the commission, is due on Sept. 8. Four previous base-closing commissions have endorsed 85 percent of the Pentagon's recommendations. President Bush and Congress must then accept or reject the list by Nov. 7.

Pentagon officials say all 425 domestic bases are under scrutiny, as the military looks to squeeze efficiencies and billions of dollars in savings from a cold war network that has nearly 25 percent more capacity than what the armed services say they need.

Mr. Lott has fiercely opposed closing bases while American military forces are fighting insurgencies in Afghanistan and Iraq. In an op-ed article in USA Today last month, he called the base-closing commission "a Congressional cop-out" that depends on "a paranoia-driven process that wastes time and money."

But Senate aides and Pentagon officials say Mr. Lott is justifiably concerned about the fate of two bases in his state, a naval station in Pascagoula and a naval air station in Meridian that previous base-closing panels have considered.

"He's got nothing to gain by Brac," said one senior Pentagon official, referring to the panel, the Base Realignment and Closure Commission. "He'll try everything."

The Senate was in recess on Friday, and telephone and e-mail messages left with two senior aides to Lott were not answered.

Senator John W. Warner, the Virginia Republican who heads the Armed Services Committee, praised the White House's decision to head off any delays.

"The existing Brac law sets a very tight schedule, with specific dates, within which the commission must hire a staff, travel to numerous military bases, consult with community leaders, conduct a thorough analysis, and prepare its detailed report," Mr. Warner said in a statement. "The time to accomplish these essential tasks is very short, and I support the president's decision to expedite their appointments."

The White House announced the recess appointments in a statement shortly before 8 p.m. on a day when much of the country was closely following the failing health of Pope John Paul II. The statement made no mention of Mr. Lott's hold on Mr. Principi.

The White House made one change to the list of nominees it sent to the Senate on March 15: Gen. Lloyd W. Newton, who is retired from the Air Force, replaced Lt. Gen. Claude M. Kicklighter, who is retired from the Army.

Under a Senate practice intended to encourage consensus, any senator can block action indefinitely and anonymously on a nomination, a promotion or legislation. These secret holds are used frequently by senators of both parties to express displeasure, not necessarily with a nominee but with an administration's action or policy.

In the past, Mr. Bush has bypassed the regular confirmation process to appoint judges and other officials opposed by Senate Democrats, but Senate aides said it was highly unusual for the White House to use such a tactic against a fellow Republican.

But there is no love lost between Mr. Bush and Mr. Lott, particularly after Mr. Bush rebuked Mr. Lott in December 2002 for his statements that appeared to embrace the segregationist appeals of Strom Thurmond's 1948 presidential campaign. Mr. Bush distanced himself from Mr. Lott, the incoming Senate majority leader at the time, by declaring that his statements "do not reflect the spirit of our country."

Washington Post
April 3, 2005
Pg. 6

President Outmaneuvers Senator On Base Closings

Appointments Made During Recess Render Lott's 'Hold' Moot

By Mike Allen, Washington Post Staff Writer

Just before Congress returned from a two-week recess, President Bush on Friday night used his recess-appointment power to thwart an effort by Sen. Trent Lott (R-Miss.) to stall the work of a military base-closing commission.

When Congress is out of session, a president can use that power to sidestep the need for Senate confirmation by appointing officials who can perform their duties until the end of that Congress. The White House made the announcement at 7:27 p.m. Friday, ahead of the Senate's return at midday Monday.

Senate officials said Lott, who has had bitter relations with the White House since being unseated as majority leader in 2002, was using a procedure known as a "hold" to prevent the Senate from voting on the nomination of Anthony J. Principi, Bush's designee as chairman of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, also known as BRAC.

The process is aimed at taking some of the political heat out of base-closing decisions. Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld is due to make his recommendations for closings and consolidations by May 16. Then the commission will evaluate them and submit a final package for up-or-down approval by Bush and then Congress.

Lott has said he objected to having decisions about base closings made by what he called an "exclusive, closed and unelected commission" instead of letting it remain the province of Congress. As a senior lawmaker, he said he would be in a better position to protect shipyards at Pascagoula and elsewhere along Mississippi's Gulf Coast.

Lott wrote Jan. 30 in his weekly column, published on his Web site, that he would rather see bases close in "an increasingly unsupportive Western Europe" than "in patriotic, taxpaying towns in Mississippi."

"I'm more worried about the plight of folks in Heidelberg, Mississippi, than Heidelberg, Germany," Lott wrote. "Base closure is not really an initiative for high-rent lobbyists and fleeting commissions to perform. Congress and the people we represent should participate in the debate and carry out the hard work of base closure."

Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John W. Warner (R-Va.) issued a statement of support for Bush's action, saying this base-closing round is important to national security and that the time to act is very short. "The existing BRAC law sets a very tight schedule, with specific dates, within which the commission must hire a staff, travel to numerous military bases, consult with community leaders, conduct a thorough analysis, and prepare its detailed report," Warner said.

Principi was secretary of veterans affairs in Bush's first administration. Pfizer Inc., the pharmaceutical giant, announced last month that Principi was becoming vice president of government relations in its Washington office.

The White House announced the recess appointment of Principi and eight other commission members without explanation. White House spokesman Ken Lisaius cited the panel's "looming deadlines" and noted that Principi had been approved by the Senate Armed Services Committee.

"The president believes there's important work for the nation to be done by BRAC," Lisaius said. "This is a step to be sure that work is done in a timely fashion."

Lott aides did not return messages yesterday. Senate aides said that Lott put the hold on after the committee's voice vote on March 17, and that he was expected to do the same with other commission nominees.

The other members of the commission named by Bush on Friday were former representative James H. Bilbray (D-Nev.); Philip E. Coyle, an assistant defense secretary under President Bill Clinton; retired Navy Adm. Harold W. Gehman Jr.; former representative James V. Hansen (R-Utah); retired Army Gen. James T. Hill; retired Air Force Gen. Lloyd Warren Newton; Samuel K. Skinner, who was White House chief of staff and transportation secretary under President George H.W. Bush; and retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Sue Ellen Turner.

New York Daily News
April 3, 2005

Circling Wagons At Fort Hamilton

By Adam Nichols, Daily News Staff Writer

It has trained soldiers for battle since the Civil War, and played a strategic role in U.S. history.

Yet Fort Hamilton in Brooklyn is facing closure - a move that would drain \$90 million from the neighborhood.

Along with its devastating effect on Bay Ridge, Dyker Heights and Bensonhurst, the fort's supporters claim closing it would sever historic ties dating to the American Revolution.

And they say it would put New York at heightened risk of a terrorist attack.

"It would be catastrophic," said Craig Eaton, chairman of the area's community board.

"The fort is an integral part of our community in many, many ways. The people from the fort keep restaurants and services here in business. If it goes, it would be devastating."

Fort Hamilton, which stands in the shadow of the Verrazano Bridge, could appear on a list of military bases targeted for closure, expected to be released by the Pentagon's Base Realignment and Closure Commission next month.

Up to 25% of the nation's bases are expected to be sunk in an effort to slim down what the commission calls "excess physical capacity."

"There is no reason why Fort Hamilton is more likely to be on the list than any other base but it is still totally realistic that it will be," said Rep. Vito Fossella, who represents Staten Island and parts of Brooklyn and is urging New Yorkers to write to the Pentagon opposing the closure.

"It's totally possible, I can't emphasize that enough. If it closes, 40,000 people who work there or rely on the fort for ... community facilities will be directly affected.

"Effectively, closing the fort would be taking a payroll of almost \$90 million away from that community. Dry cleaners, restaurants, local stores, you name it, businesses around here rely on this fort."

"A lot of people from the fort come in here," said Anthony Rinaldi, manager of the Pearl Room restaurant on Third Ave.

"If it closed down, we would definitely see a huge effect. I need it to stay open."

Fort Hamilton is New York City's only active-duty military installation. It houses more than 40 military and government agencies including the 77th Regional Readiness Corps, the New York National Guard and the FBI.

It is in a strategic location to support New York if attacked, said Fossella.

But it's no stranger to being threatened with closure. It faced the same danger in 1995 when the Base Realignment and Closure Commission published its previous list. That time, it managed to escape being one of the 57 installations recommended - though it was earmarked for downsizing by 52 civilian jobs.

"They are looking at its significance to national security and its military value. As New York City's only active duty military installation, hopefully they'll see it is essential."

A Department of Defense spokeswoman said, "We are in the middle of the process and it would be premature to speak about any individual case."

Charlotte Observer, The (NC)
April 3, 2005

BUSH OKS BASE CLOSINGS PANEL - 9-MEMBER GROUP CAN MAKE DECISIONS WITHOUT SENATE'S CONFIRMATION

By DOUGLASS K. DANIEL, ASSOCIATED PRESS

President Bush, brushing aside a stall tactic by Sen. Trent Lott, R-Miss., appointed the nine-member commission that will determine military **bases** closings without waiting for Senate confirmation.

Bush made the appointments while the Senate was in recess, the White House announced Friday night. The recess appointments prevent delays as the commission prepares to make the first round of **base** closings in a decade.

Before it left for its spring recess, the full Senate had been expected to vote on the nomination of Anthony Principi, former secretary of veterans affairs, as chairman of the Defense **Base Closure** and **Realignment** Commission. The other commissioners, nominated by Bush on March 15, also required Senate confirmation.

Lott opposes **base closures** and has pledged to protect military facilities in his home state. He placed a "hold" on Principi's nomination, according to aides and lobbyists speaking on condition of anonymity.

Lott was expected to place holds on the other nominations as well, the aides and lobbyists told The Associated Press last week. The Senate Armed Services Committee had approved Principi's nomination and planned to review the other nominations in the next few weeks.

The White House said Bush felt the recess appointments were appropriate, since the full committee had already acted on Principi. Plus, the president wants no delay in the "important work for the nation" that the **base closure** panel will have before it, spokesman Ken Lisaius said Saturday.

"The president believes there is important work for the (commission) to start on," he said.

Lott has said the United States should not be closing **bases** while troops are at war. "I will try to stop it at any point and in any way I possibly can," he said in February.

Appointed to the commission were: Principi, of California, chairman; former Rep. James Bilbray of Nevada; former Assistant Defense Secretary Philip Coyle of California; retired Adm. Harold Gehman Jr. of Virginia; retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Sue Ellen Turner of Texas; former Rep. James Hansen of Utah; retired Army Gen. James Hill of Florida; Samuel Knox Skinner of Illinois, former chief of staff and transportation secretary under President George H.W. Bush; retired Air Force Gen. Lloyd Warren Newton of Connecticut.

San Antonio Express-News (TX)
April 3, 2005

One way or another, city-base will pay off

The Air Force has a good deal at Brooks City-**Base**.

Under the auspices of the Brooks Development Authority, San Antonio has taken ownership of the **base** and is paying its operational costs.

The innovative arrangement is the first of its kind and, in all, has reduced Air Force costs by \$5 million a year or more, Brooks officials estimate. The city provides fire and police protection, emergency medical service and grounds maintenance, in addition to a low-cost, long-term lease to the Air Force, which remains the largest tenant at the South Side facility.

Still, local officials can't be certain that Brooks will escape the list of targeted facilities when the Pentagon releases its recommendations May 16.

The Pentagon included Brooks AFB on its 1995 **base closure** list, but the facility survived when the **base closure** commission opted to shutter Kelly AFB.

Spawned by the close call in 1995, the city-**base** concept was designed to protect the missions at Brooks, which bring a \$264 million annual payroll to San Antonio's economy.

The trade-off is clearly worthwhile for San Antonio. Local government and Texas congressional leaders deserve kudos for their response to the threatened loss of Brooks.

Until the Pentagon and the commission make their decisions, San Antonians won't know whether the Herculean effort was enough. The financial incentives provided to the Air Force by the city-**base** arrangement may or may not tip the scales in Brooks' favor.

In the end, the merits of the missions and the cost-effectiveness of keeping them at Brooks will determine the facility's fate.

With almost 25 percent in surplus capacity at domestic military facilities, the **base closure** process is necessary to ensure that federal defense dollars are being spent wisely.

Still, the results will cause pain in communities around the nation.

Even if the Air Force decides to move some or all of its missions from the research-oriented Brooks City-**Base**, San Antonio will have taken its best shot.

Win or lose in the **base closure** process, the work already done by the Brooks Development Authority to create a research park represents farsighted preparation for San Antonio's future, with or without the Air Force.

If the Pentagon fully recognizes the city-**base's** groundbreaking implications for savings at other facilities around the nation, Brooks should stand a good chance of keeping its military missions.

Union Leader, The (Manchester, NH)
April 1, 2005

Retired captain: Shipyard will be on list

By JERRY MILLER

KITTERY, Maine -- The director of the Seacoast Shipyard Association contends the Portsmouth Navy Shipyard will likely be recommended for **closure** when the Department of Defense releases its list six weeks from today.

Retired Navy Capt. and association chief William McDonough yesterday said of the nation's oldest shipyard, "If there is going to be any (yards) closed, we're in a prime position."

While a formal list has yet to be released, McDonough said he believes one already exists. "We know the list is in existence. The Navy has made its position known."

And, while he does not know for certain that the nation's oldest shipyard is on the list, "There are indications that lead me to fear that."

He offered no specifics.

Since the latest rounds of military **base** closings began in the 1990s, four of the Navy's nuclear capable shipyards have been closed, reducing the number of employees from 70,000 to 22,000.

The local shipyard has 5,000 civilian employees, which, according to McDonough, makes it vulnerable.

In addition to Portsmouth, the remaining yards are at Pearl Harbor, Norfolk, Va., and Washington state.

McDonough, a former commanding officer of the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, warned it is unlikely that shipyards will be judged for **closure** on "objective criteria," including innovations and the ability to return submarines to the seas under or on budget and ahead of schedule, two criteria the Portsmouth Navy Yard routinely meets.

"The private sector will drive the decision," he said, specifically the corporations that own and operate Electric Boat, in Groton, Conn., and Newport News, Va. Both facilities build ships and have nuclear licenses and can do submarine maintenance work.

"The corporations are telling the Department of Defense, 'We need the work,' and the work that is available is being done in the public yards," including Portsmouth, he said.

Shipyard funds

CONCORD (AP) -- The House approved a bill yesterday to provide \$100,000 in state funds to help protect the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard from **closure**.

The proposal must be considered in the Senate.

The House plan would direct money to the Seacoast Shipyard Association, a group working to keep the shipyard open. Funds would be designated for lobbying efforts in Washington D.C. Under the bill, it also could be used for potential legal fees and promotional efforts to save the shipyard.

Day, The (New London, CT)
March 31, 2005

Dodd says China makes case for sub base - Senator cites naval threat in letter sent to Rumsfeld

By Robert A. Hamilton

Groton - A growing Chinese naval threat should be enough reason to keep the Naval Submarine **Base** off the 2005 **base closure** list, U.S. Sen. Christopher J. Dodd, D-Conn., argues in a letter to Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld.

The Navy is likely to need more submarines than it has now as it seeks to contain the Chinese threat, and that means it needs piers, training stations and repair sites - all present at the Groton **base**, Dodd said in a press conference Wednesday.

"This is the critical area for submarine technology in the United States, arguably in the world," Dodd said. "We don't want to lose that."

Dodd said if the Navy continues to reduce its fleet, from a Cold War high of 600 ships to 288 today, "in the next 10 to 15 years ... we may find ourselves regretting the inferior position we've put ourselves in."

Dodd said just nine years ago that the Chinese amassed 150,000 troops, 227 aircraft and four landing craft at **bases** across from Taiwan, which prompted the United States to send two aircraft carrier battle groups into the region to keep the peace.

But he said China is clearly developing a force that could be a threat to U.S. carrier groups, including the purchase of 12 capable Russian diesel submarines and development of a domestic diesel submarine, the Yuan class, which surprised military analysts with its capabilities.

In addition, Dodd said, China is nearing completion of its type 094 nuclear attack submarine, said to be capable of launching cruise missiles.

"I was stunned" to learn of the developments in the world press, Dodd said.

"How do you go 10 years without knowing they were developing a very sophisticated piece of technology?" he asked. "The fact we would not know what direction they were heading is very disturbing."

"This is like the 1920s - the Germans were clandestine about what they were doing, and the rest of the world didn't pay attention. I'm all in favor of working with them to alleviate the threat, but you cannot be naïve about this."

In his letter to Rumsfeld, Dodd notes: "Just as U.S. submarines have proven indispensable in the war on terrorism, our submarine fleet remains indispensable in developing an American response to an emerging Chinese navy."

Although Groton is on the other side of the world from China, Dodd said the combination of 17 operational submarines with the Naval Submarine Support Facility to repair them and Naval Submarine School to train their crews - not to mention the proximity of Electric Boat, which designs, builds and overhauls submarines - is irreplaceable.

"Could you imagine trying to relocate a facility like this?" he asked.

Dodd also asked Rumsfeld to continue modernizing submarine **bases**, invest more money in the next generation of nuclear attack submarines, increase naval intelligence-gathering capabilities, and develop effective countermeasures to cruise-missile threats.

Rumsfeld will issue his recommendations for **base closures** May 16, at which point the **Base Realignment and Closure** Commission will begin its review.

In a related matter, Dodd said he thinks the chances that Connecticut might get a representative on the BRAC panel are "pretty good." Retired Air Force Gen. Floyd Newton, a Pratt (and) Whitney Aircraft vice president, has been named as a possible replacement nominee. Congressional sources have said a retired Army lieutenant general from Georgia is not interested in continuing on the panel.

The BRAC nominees include just one person with Air Force experience compared to four Army and three Navy, no one from the northeastern United States, and no minorities. Newton, an African-American, could eliminate all those shortcomings.

"Having some balance makes sense," Dodd said. "You're talking about someone with enormous experience and background. This is not someone who's going to have a sharp learning curve."

Atlanta Journal-Constitution
April 5, 2005
Pg. 4B

Ga. Loses Its Spot On Base Panel

By Bob Kemper

Washington -- Georgia lost its seat Monday on a commission that will oversee the closing of military bases this year.

President Bush formally notified the Senate that he was withdrawing retired Army Lt. Gen. Claude Kicklighter's nomination to that panel. Kicklighter, a Georgia native and chief of staff at the Department of Veterans Affairs, was replaced on the nine-member panel by retired Air Force Gen. Lloyd "Fig" Newton of Connecticut.

Officials familiar with the nomination said Kicklighter knew from the start that he would be replaced. Kicklighter could not be reached Monday for comment.

Bush submitted Kicklighter's name to the Senate to meet a statutory deadline because another would-be nominee, retired Army Gen. John Coburn, could not be cleared in time, those officials said. Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist had nominated Coburn and selected Newton to replace him, officials said.

Georgia has 13 military installations that could be closed or revamped in the base-closing process. The state escaped previous rounds of closings unscathed.

Bush acted after Sen. Trent Lott (R-Miss.) blocked a vote last month on one of Bush's nominees to protest the closings.

Hartford Courant, The (CT)
April 3, 2005

NORTHEAST GETS BASE-CLOSING VOICE - PRATT EXECUTIVE ADDED TO PANEL

A retired Air Force general who works as an executive at Pratt & Whitney in East Hartford has been appointed to the commission that will decide which military **bases** should be closed, the White House said Friday.

Lloyd W. Newton, who goes by the nickname "Fig," will provide a Connecticut voice on the **Base Realignment and Closure** Commission, which may consider the future of the Naval Submarine **Base** in Groton.

Gov. M. Jodi Rell, Rep. Rob Simmons, R-2nd District, and others fought to add a Northeastern voice to the commission.

Rell spokesman Dennis Schain said the governor was pleased that President Bush and Sen. Majority Leader Bill Frist, R-Tenn., responded to her recommendation to appoint Newton.

"Gen. Newton brings great military and defense expertise to the work of the commission," Schain said. "He also understands our view of the importance of the sub **base** and the vital role it can play in the nation's defense."

"We've fought very hard to ensure New England has a voice on the **base** closing commission, and today's announcement fits the bill," Simmons said Friday. "We expect Gen. Newton to be a very expert, fair and important member of the BRAC."

The original list of appointees included people from California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Nevada, Texas, Utah and Virginia, but no one from the Northeast. A space later opened.

Newton, one of nine appointees to the commission, retired from the Air Force after a career in a variety of important command positions, including director of operations of U.S. Special Operations Command. He has more than 4,000 flying hours in a host of aircraft and flew 269 combat missions in Vietnam.

He was also the first African American to win a spot on the Air Force's aerial demonstration team, the Thunderbirds.

The Department of Defense wants to close **bases** so money can be shifted elsewhere in the military budget.

Daily News of Los Angeles (CA)
April 2, 2005

AREA AIMS TO SAVE BASES - A.V. LEADERS PROPOSE IDEA

By Jim Skeen

EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE - As time draws near for the Pentagon to recommend which **bases** to close, Antelope Valley civic leaders are making one last push to promote the region's military installations.

On Monday, a delegation from the Antelope Valley Board of Trade will begin a series of meetings with defense and congressional leaders in Washington, D.C. While the delegation is at the nation's Capitol to discuss a variety of issues, the upcoming round of **base** closures will be a major topic.

"We're tailoring meetings to talk about BRAC (**Base Closure and Realignment** Commission) and about the importance of Edwards Air Force **Base**, China Lake and Plant 42," said Lew Stults, the board's president.

"It's a support-type thing - we're not there to stir things up. I think anybody who goes back there and has a positive story about **bases**, somehow that tickles up (to the decision makers)."

One of the members of the delegation will be Bob Johnstone, an aerospace consultant for the city of Lancaster. He was recently named as executive director of the Edwards Community Alliance, a support group comprised of representatives of eight communities near the **base**.

Johnstone also serves as the executive director of the Southwest Defense Alliance. Both alliances are promoting the idea of consolidating military test and evaluation, research and development, and training missions in the U.S. Southwest.

Johnstone said he was planning to meet with as many congressional representatives and Pentagon officials as possible to discuss how such a complex fits in with the Defense Department's goals of creating a leaner, more flexible military.

"The focus is not to ask them to do anything for us; rather, it's on how we can do things to help the nation," said Tom Wardlaw, president of the Edwards Community Alliance.

While the May 16 deadline is drawing near for the Pentagon to announce its recommendations for which **bases** to close, Wardlaw said he believes there is still time to influence the process. Senior Pentagon officials have said they haven't the time to listen to lobbying efforts, but Wardlaw thinks positive messages can reach decision-makers.

"The formal channels of communication aren't open, but there are informal channels," Wardlaw said. "I still think there's people listening and thinking."

A possible component of the Southwest Defense Complex is a joint aerospace research, development, test and evaluation center composed of Edwards Air Force **Base** and the Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division sites at China Lake in Kern County and Point Mugu in Ventura County.

Backers of the concept argue that Edwards, Mugu and China Lake already possess most of the laboratories and test facilities needed to accommodate a joint aerospace complex and that any costs from the addition of hangars and other support facilities would be quickly covered by the savings from consolidation.

State Sen. Roy Ashburn, R-Bakersfield, whose district includes Edwards and the China Lake Naval Warfare Center, sent a letter to Vice President Dick Cheney urging the Bush administration to consider the

aerospace center proposal. Ashburn wrote that the proposal meets Rumsfeld's goals of creating a leaner, more flexible military.

“It proposes consolidating a significant portion of aircraft, weapon and related technology support onto three sites in the West where technical expertise and land, air and sea space are available without encroachment,” Ashburn wrote to Cheney. “The joint center would have the added benefits of supporting other technologies and mission areas such as space propulsion, electronic warfare test and training, and providing ranges for use by the many training installations in the Southwest.”

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld will issue his proposal for which **bases** to close on May 16. The **base closure** commission will hold hearings through the summer and issue its recommendations to President George W. Bush in September.

On Tuesday, Rumsfeld told a press conference that the impact of the **base closure** round would be less than the often cited figure of 20 percent to 25 percent of the nation's **bases**. The large number of forces overseas that will return home will lessen the number of **bases** targeted for **closure**.

Rumsfeld called the **base closure** round as “good thing.”

“It says to the taxpayers of America, by golly, we care about your dollars and we're going to see that the dollars are spent in an intelligent way on things that are actually needed, rather than waste funds,” Rumsfeld said.

The previous four rounds of **base closures** since the 1990s have saved the Defense Department an estimated \$28.9 billion, Pentagon officials said. Another round could save as much as an additional \$7 billion annually, federal officials said.

At stake are California's 36 major and 25 minor facilities - the most of any state. Previous **closures** hit California hard, axing 29 major installations and cutting 100,000 defense-related jobs.

USA Today
April 6, 2005
Pg. 6

Sen. Lott Will Continue To Fight Military Base Closings

Sen. Trent Lott, R-Miss., said he is not finished trying to halt this year's planned closure of domestic military bases even though President Bush thwarted his latest attempt.

“I have options on unrelated issues,” said Lott, who had prevented a Senate vote to confirm a member of the commission that will recommend which bases to close.

President Bush put all the commissioners in office last month when senators were on vacation. The Constitution allows a president to fill vacancies when the Senate is in recess. “I used my right to hold a nominee. They used their right to a recess appointment. I'm disappointed in that...but we'll deal with that when the time comes,” Lott said.

Lott's attempt last year to get the Senate to stop the closures failed by two votes.

Base closings are unpopular in Congress because communities worry about the economic impact. Lott's state is home to three military facilities.

The independent commission will draw a list that President Bush and Congress must reject or accept, but can't change.

Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., said, "We have to close bases. We don't have that much money to keep these bases open."

Biloxi Sun Herald
April 5, 2005

Taylor: Base Closings Stupid

By Melissa M. Scallan

GULFPORT - Congressman Gene Taylor believes it is a "very distinct possibility" that Naval Station Pascagoula will be closed in the next round of base closures.

He also said closing installations could cost the federal government more money than it saves in the long run.

Taylor recently returned from a trip to Iraq and spoke to The Sun Herald on Monday about his experiences there and his opinion about closing bases.

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld has indicated he wants to close one of every four U.S. military bases. Naval Station Pascagoula, Keesler Air Force Base and Meridian Naval Air Station have been mentioned as possible targets for the Base Realignment and Closure Commission.

Taylor isn't shy about voicing his opinion of Rumsfeld or his plan.

"Rumsfeld can retire today and it would be too late," Taylor said. "He came up with a number of 25 percent capacity in January of 2001. He is sticking to that number."

But Taylor believes the percentage of base closures could be much higher based on conversations he's had with the undersecretary of Defense.

"They're on record as saying it could be as much as 40 percent and probably would be as much as 40," Taylor said. "I think it's going to be the mother of all BRAC. I think they're going to make some horrible mistakes and close installations that we need."

"They're going to close places where we have brand new housing that the troops and their families need," he added. "I think it is incredibly stupid."

"Rumsfeld is the most hard-headed person I've ever met, and he made up his mind in January 2001 that there was going to be a huge BRAC."

Taylor said Jackson County officials formed a committee to work with the military on a plan for the base, which includes the county taking over the installation and leasing parts of it to the military.

"I think the county has taken a proactive look at this, a very realistic look," Taylor said. "I don't want it to close. As a congressman, I've helped put \$40 million to \$50 million of things on that base, so the last thing I want to see is it close."

President Bush will get a list of recommended base closures by Labor Day, Taylor said. He will have until Oct. 1 to make changes and send the list to Congress. Congress will have 30 days to approve or reject the list.

Taylor believes closing bases costs more money than it saves and points to past rounds of closures as examples.

"Right now, we're buying 35,000 acres of land in North Carolina so we can build runways to make up for the runways that we gave away in Jacksonville, Fla., when we closed that base," he said. "They're going to make lots of bad mistakes. I can't tell you how much I'm against BRAC."

"Ten years from now, we're going to be out buying land and building bases - spending a fortune to make up for the land and the bases they're going to give away in this round of BRAC."

San Antonio Express-News
April 5, 2005

Texans Endorse Bush's Recess Move To Advance BRAC

By Gary Martin, Express-News Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — President Bush's recess appointment of a base closure commission and the selection of another member with San Antonio ties were applauded Monday by Texas officials preparing for the Pentagon cuts. The addition of retired Air Force Gen. Lloyd Warren "Fig" Newton of Connecticut, a former commander of the Air Education and Training Command at Randolph AFB, means three of the nine panel members have links to Texas or San Antonio.

The Base Realignment and Closure, or BRAC, commission will oversee the Pentagon's "hit list" to be released by May 16.

Bush made the recess appointment late Friday to thwart a delay by Sen. Trent Lott, R-Miss., who threatened to use parliamentary moves to block Senate confirmation of the commission and stop the BRAC process.

"BRAC has to move forward," said Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Cornyn said a delay in confirmation of the BRAC panel would have put it behind on an already tight schedule. The panel still must hire staff and prepare for the closure list from the Pentagon that by law must be submitted by May 16.

The Senate Armed Services Committee approved the appointment of former Veterans Affairs Secretary Anthony Principi to serve as chairman of the BRAC panel, but has not held hearings on the other panelists.

Presidential recess appointments do not need Senate confirmation, and will expire when the 109th Congress ends in 2006. The panel is required to finish its work by April 15, 2006.

Although the Senate often balks at the presidential prerogative of recess appointments, Bush's action was praised by Sen. John Warner, R-Va., the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Warner said the short time frame made it necessary to expedite the appointments.

San Antonio officials agreed.

"I think it was a necessary move and I give the president a lot of credit," said retired Brig. Gen. John Jernigan, executive director of the San Antonio Military Missions Task Force.

Texas has 17 major military installations. Four are in San Antonio and four others are in the Coastal Bend region near Corpus Christi.

In addition to the recess appointment, Bush replaced retired Lt. Gen. Claude Kicklighter of Georgia with Newton, a former assistant vice chief of staff of the Air Force.

The White House withdrew the Kicklighter nomination without comment on Monday.

Newton served as commander of the Air Education and Training Command in San Antonio from 1997 to 2000 at Randolph. He later worked for the engine manufacturer, Pratt & Whitney, a tenant at Kelly USA.

Also serving on the panel is retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Sue Ellen Turner, who served in 1990 as chief of the Division of Nursing at Wilford Hall USAF Medical Center.

"We now have a second general who is familiar with San Antonio," said Jernigan, who remains optimistic that San Antonio bases could grow through consolidation during this closure round.

Also on the commission is retired Army Gen. James T. Hill of El Paso, a 1968 graduate of Trinity University and a former combatant commander of the U.S. Southern Command.

Generals with San Antonio ties have served on the base closure panels in the past, including the 1995 round when the commission went beyond Pentagon recommendations and added to the closure list Kelly AFB.

Joe Robles Jr., a retired Army major general and executive with USAA Financial Services in San Antonio, served on that 1995 commission.

The 1993 commission had two commissioners with Texas ties: Ret. Air Force Gen. Hansford T. Johnson, a former USAA chief of staff; and Harry McPherson, a Tyler native who served in the Lyndon B. Johnson administration and a former deputy undersecretary of the Army.

Texas bases closed in 1993 included Naval Air Station Chase Field near Beeville, Bergstrom AFB in Austin, Dallas Naval Air Station and Carswell AFB in Fort Worth.

Star-Ledger, The (Newark, NJ)
April 5, 2005

Backers begin early Picatinny campaign Base closings panel again poses a threat

By Al Frank

With a fifth round of **base** closings to be announced in just six weeks, local officials converged on Picatinny Arsenal yesterday and said they were ready to mobilize support for the installation.

While barred from lobbying on Picatinny's behalf, Brig. Gen. Paul Izzo and other staff instead used PowerPoint presentations and exhibits to arm the local leaders with information on the importance of the Rockaway Township installation.

The public will also be able to get a close look when up to 10,000 visitors will be welcomed back on the 6,500-acre **base** on May 21 for the first time since before 9/11.

"It's all about soldiers and getting them the things they need to do the job," said Izzo, who took over as commanding officer in July.

But with local residents making up many of Picatinny's 4,300 employees, municipal officials said they were long aware not only of its contribution to the military and the local economy but also to the help it gives neighboring communities.

Victory Gardens Mayor Nanette Courtine, for example, said that community's emergency response team has benefited from training and drills staged at Picatinny. So has NJ Transit.

"If we ever lost it, it would not only be a true blow to the community in terms of employment but to the safety of the entire nation," Courtine said.

She spoke after Izzo showed off an adaptation of the M-16 that will convert into a smaller, hand-held weapon "like a Transformer toy" and discussed "Excalibur," a new artillery round with global positioning in its nose cone that guides firepower to a target as small as a mailbox up to 25 miles away.

In addition to munitions, Picatinny has developed nonlethal weaponry and technology to safely dispose of the hazardous components of obsolete explosives. It also conducts research in cooperation with New Jersey colleges.

"The stuff they're doing here is critically important to the war effort," Randolph Mayor Allen Napoliello said. "It wouldn't be easy to duplicate."

To control costs, the Pentagon is considering closing up to 125 of its 500 military installations beginning next year. Picatinny narrowly escaped a shutdown during the last review of military **bases**, in 1995.

In previous rounds, a **base's** effect on the local economy could be argued as a reason against closing it. In the current round, greater weight will be given to an installation's military necessity and its ability to perform services for more than one branch of the military.

The process is scheduled to begin May 16, when the Pentagon is to release a list of **bases** it proposes to be closed, realigned with other posts or expanded. An independent nine-member panel called the **Base Realignment and Closure** Commission - frequently referred to as BRAC - will then consider the plan and make the final cuts.

San Diego Union-Tribune, The (CA)
April 5, 2005

Airport agency urged to cool its jets Lawmakers want review of military sites delayed

By Jeff Ristine

Faced with mounting bipartisan hostility over its strategy for studying potential future airport sites, San Diego's regional airport agency likely will agree next week to keep its review of military installations on the back burner until November.

But members of the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority board said yesterday they also may seek "first dibs" on any suitable **base** if efforts fail to insulate the county's military installations from this year's round of Defense Department **base** relocations and **closures**.

"When there's a **base closure** that's announced, there's a feeding frenzy," said board member Morris Vance, the mayor of Vista.

Legislation giving the airport authority first chance at the **bases** would provide some assurance while the process plays out, Vance and others said.

If a San Diego County **base** on the authority's list were recommended for **closure** in May, the board had wanted to be able to begin studying it then.

Now, the board likely would wait until November -- a change stemming from an ultimatum Thursday from San Diego County's four state senators and eight Assembly members.

The lawmakers said efforts in the Legislature and Congress to "maintain a strong military presence" in California could be jeopardized by any discussion over alternate use of the Miramar Marine Corps Air Station, North Island Naval Air Station and other sites for a civilian airport.

The board put off a vote on a new project schedule until it meets Monday. It left little doubt it will succumb to the pressure.

"We have to listen to what those folks are saying," said board member Mary Teresa Sessom, the mayor of Lemon Grove.

But Sessom said the agency also needs face-to-face meetings with state and congressional officials to repair their fractured relationship.

One critic of the airport authority's work so far, Assemblyman George Plescia, said he is "definitely open to talking to them about the issue and their concerns."

But Plescia, R-San Diego, said the board has been sending the "wrong message" when others are fighting to preserve San Diego's military infrastructure.

The board had planned to consider how to proceed with five military installations on its list of potential airport sites May 17, the day after the Pentagon's deadline to identify proposed **base** closings nationwide. Besides Miramar and North Island, the agency wants to examine the suitability of East Miramar, Camp Pendleton and March Air Reserve **Base** near Riverside, along with the possibility of using property occupied by the Marine Corps Recruit Depot to expand the footprint of Lindbergh Field.

Since March 22, the county's congressional delegation, California's two U.S. senators, San Diego Mayor Dick Murphy and state legislators have sent letters to the airport authority warning that the May date would be too early to study military sites.

"Your current efforts may well have unintended consequences that could have far reaching effects," the legislators wrote.

Though it was less blunt than the congressional letter, the legislators' message made the same request -- remove all military **bases** from analysis until November -- and it gave the agency 10 days to develop a new schedule.

By November, the **base closure** list is expected to be acted upon by a commission, the president and Congress.

The new schedule, it turned out, already was ready.

Ricondo & Associates, the consulting team on the site selection project, said it would have analysts work on nonmilitary sites only until November. The study will address such issues as airspace, social impact, noise, air quality and financial feasibility.

Locations in Boulevard, Borrego Springs and the Imperial County desert are on the list, although one or more could be eliminated next month when the board considers accessibility issues.

By waiting until November to analyze military sites on the same issues, the review wouldn't end until March or next April. The authority would then have to choose an airport site and ask voters to approve it in November 2006.

San Diego Councilman Ralph Inzunza, an authority board member, questioned whether the compressed schedule left enough elbow room for a decision on a site and a successful ballot campaign, noting work on measures for the San Diego Convention Center and Petco Park began a year or more ahead of a public vote.

"You might as well delay to November of '08," Inzunza said.

Board members also speculated on how to avoid being placed at a disadvantage in any scramble for abandoned military property.

Paul Peterson, a lawyer appointed to the board by Murphy, noted the Pentagon urges communities to develop contingency plans for their **bases** even as they lobby to retain them.

"Everybody and their brother is going to be moving in on this," Peterson said.

Legislation that established the authority identifies it as the only "agency" empowered to acquire airfields abandoned by the military.

But the authority's general counsel, Breton K. Lobner, cautioned that the legislation is far from definitive.

Under study

- o The San Diego Regional Airport Authority has named nine potential sites for an international airport to replace or augment Lindbergh Field, including five military **bases**: the Marines' Miramar Air Station, East Miramar and Camp Pendleton; North Island Naval Air Station; and March Air Reserve **Base** near Riverside.

- o Other sites are near Boulevard in East County; near Borrego Springs; and the Imperial Valley desert.

- o A second runway at Lindbergh Field also is under review. That would require using land occupied by the Marine Corps Recruit Depot.

Journal Gazette, The (Fort Wayne, IN)
April 5, 2005

EDITORIAL: Surviving base closings

As Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld prepares to recommend closing a number of the nation's military **bases**, few are immune from the budgetary ax - and that includes the substantial Air National Guard **base** in Fort Wayne.

While public officials rally to protect military jobs at the more vulnerable Grissom Air Reserve **Base** and the Crane Naval Surface Warfare Center (see map), local Air Guard and economic development leaders are rightly seeking to give Fort Wayne residents a better appreciation of the importance of the local operation.

The direct effect of the 122nd Fighter Wing's location at Fort Wayne International Airport is substantial. The wing employs 1,000 members of the Air Guard - including, significantly, 335 full-time workers. Most of the remainder are from Fort Wayne and the surrounding area, and they draw a payroll of more than \$26 million. These are good-paying jobs, with an average wage of \$22 to \$25 per hour.

Of perhaps greater importance, the Guard is the largest and most important user of the airport, making it vital for the federal government to make sure the airport is well funded and in top repair. Construction of a new airport tower is largely the result of the Guard's use of the airport, and the Air Guard is directly responsible for other airport expenditures - including a \$6 million runway built a decade ago.

The airport is key to the region's economic development efforts, and the Air Guard is a key component of the airport.

Local Air Guard officials are cautiously optimistic that the local operation will survive the current round of **Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC)** cuts. In fact, Fort Wayne could gain if other operations are

transferred to the 122nd. But they note that Indiana has a second Air Guard fighter wing, in Terre Haute, and any operations Rumsfeld deems duplicative are vulnerable.

Even if the local operation survives this round of BRAC changes - Rumsfeld will announce his proposed closings and other changes by May 16 - the 122nd Fighter Wing will face a major overhaul at some point. The F-16s the wing flies will eventually be replaced by a new generation of fighter jets that will be fewer in number.

Peru and the smaller community of Bunker Hill survived a previous round of **base** closing a decade ago, but not without injury. Grissom was closed as a full Air Force **base**, but effective political maneuvering and community support transformed it into an Air Reserve **base** that continued to contribute to the local economy, albeit on a lesser scale.

The local Air Guard garners attention when it is deployed to a war zone - as it was last year - but is under the radar of most area residents most of the time. In addition to fulfilling the lofty goals of helping protect the nation's defense, the 122nd Fighter Wing is of vital importance to the local economy.

Viewpoint

Corpus Christi Caller-Times (TX)
April 4, 2005

We need to send a message to Washington

By Lloyd Neal

During the past 12 years, the South Texas Military Facilities Task Force has worked with our congressional delegation, state officials, local communities and the United States Navy and Army to follow through on our pledge to provide military value and an exceptional quality of life for military personnel and their families here in South Texas.

Since the inception of this round of **Base Realignment** and **Closure**, we have carried a strong South Texas message to the Pentagon and Capitol Hill.

Here are the main themes:

* Lack of encroachment.

The four area facilities - Naval Station Ingleside, Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, the Corpus Christi Army Depot and Naval Air Station Kingsville - provide the Department of Defense with the nation's only deepwater port, air fields, depot facilities and training ranges that are free of air, land or sea encroachment issues.

* Strategic location.

Naval Station Ingleside is the Navy's only deepwater port in the Gulf of Mexico that can accommodate any ship in the fleet. Located amid critical oil, gas, refining and industrial facilities, Naval Station Ingleside is ideally located for homeland defense purposes. Additionally, Naval Station Ingleside's location provides the United States with a strategic port in close proximity to our vital, southernmost sea-lanes of communication, matching the Navy's strategic ports on the East and West coasts.

* Mine warfare.

The value of the Mine Warfare Center of Excellence was demonstrated in Operation Iraqi Freedom. The training facilities and ranges, industry support and collocation of airborne and sea assets optimized the

capability of this critical "access" mission. Disestablishing the Mine Warfare Center of Excellence and/or reducing the dedicated mine warfare force marginalizes this vital strategic mission. Naval Station Ingleside is the ideal location to integrate current training with training for the emerging organic mine warfare programs.

* Community and state investments.

Closing Naval Station Ingleside would break faith with the state of Texas and the citizens of the Coastal Bend who invested more than \$55 million in the **base**. The state just committed an additional \$5.2 million for more rail infrastructure to support strategic military deployments through the Port of Corpus Christi.

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld cannot gauge our community's support for the military simply from the briefings provided by the South Texas Military Facilities Task Force and the data calls sent by the **base** commanders. Our support is more personal and must be conveyed by those of us who live in South Texas.

We ask you to join us by sending a clear and unambiguous message that will define the relationship between the military and our Coastal Bend communities to Secretary Rumsfeld and the Navy leadership.

Let them know that you stand with our servicemen and women and in support of the **bases** here in the Coastal Bend.

Because security measures can delay the delivery of regular mail to the Pentagon and Congress, we suggest you fax your correspondence in addition to mailing it.

If you would like to provide the South Texas Military Facilities Task Force with a copy of your correspondence, we have provided a local fax number as well.

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Boston Globe, The (MA)
April 3, 2005

**ANALYST SAYS HANSCOM LOSSES ARE UNCERTAIN -
CAUTIONS AGAINST OVERESTIMATING IMPACT OF BASE CLOSING ON STATE'S
ECONOMY**

By Matt Viser, Globe Staff

A financial adviser to the four towns surrounding Hanscom Air Force **Base** has cautioned against overestimating the financial impact of its potential closing, an assessment that has surprised some of the local officials who hired him and who want to present the best possible case for keeping the **base** open.

Richard Paik, of Bonz and Company, told a meeting of the Hanscom Area Town Selectmen's organization on March 24 that closing the **base** would mean the loss of about \$200 million in defense contracts to Massachusetts firms. He said that he could not determine the number of jobs that would be lost due to the **closure**.

"Let's not get too terrified and think everything will go down the tubes if the **base** closes," said Paik, who is part of a team hired by the officials to evaluate what the closing of the **base** would mean to the area.

At the same time, the Massachusetts Defense Technology Initiative, chaired by Governor Mitt Romney and Senator Edward M. Kennedy, for months has been claiming that the **base's** closing would take 30,220 jobs and \$3 billion from the local economy, figures used to bolster the argument to Pentagon officials that the **base** is worth keeping open.

A spokesman for the Defense Technology Initiative said this week that \$3 billion figure was accurate and represented not only the loss of defense contract revenue but the impact the **base** closing would have on the economy at large.

Paik's analysis doesn't take into account the number of jobs that would be lost. "The answer to how many jobs will be lost, I don't know," Paik said at the March 24 meeting. "And there's really no way of knowing."

The US Department of Defense is considering a list of possible **bases** to close, and military specialists have said that Hanscom is a prime target for either shuttering or downsizing. Local officials from Bedford, Concord, Lexington, and Lincoln have fought for the **base** to stay open, but they have also hired Sasaki Associates, a Watertown-based consultant, to analyze the **base's** infrastructure and advise them on what to do if the **base** closes.

Paik, the financial adviser, is part of that team, which was hired through a \$156,000 grant from the federal government.

Paik could not be reached for comment, but Fred Merrill, the project manager for Sasaki, downplayed the differences in the assessments last week in an interview, saying they were not trying to dispute the Defense Technology Initiative's figure.

"We have the same general numbers. It's just how you define them," Merrill said.

Still, Paik's statements concerned many at the March 24 meeting. Several area officials took Paik aside after his presentation to dispute his figures. After talking with the officials, Paik said he was planning to meet with representatives from the Defense Technology Initiative to compare their assessments with his.

The concern of officials over Paik's assessment illustrates the importance they have placed on presenting the most convincing arguments available on why the **base** should be kept open and the sensitivity they feel over even the slightest suggestion that closing the **base** will not be catastrophic. It also shows how difficult it is to predict far-reaching financial implications.

In an interview last week, Sara Mattes, a Lincoln selectwoman and chairwoman of the Hanscom area group, downplayed the differences between the two assessments.

"I'm not going to quibble over the numbers," said Mattes. "Regardless, we know that the impact is going to be huge."

Paik analyzed defense contracts that were distributed through Hanscom in 2003. He found that of the \$3.3 billion that went out, about \$800 million, or 25 percent, went to Massachusetts-based firms. A large bulk of the funds that went to Massachusetts about \$600 million went to Lincoln Labs and MITRE, two companies

that Paik expects will stay in Massachusetts even if Hanscom is closed. So, he says, only about \$200 million would be lost if Hanscom were closed.

He also argues that since 75 percent of the defense contracts distributed by Hanscom went to out-of-state companies, Massachusetts businesses could still reap the benefits of military money even if the **base** was shut down.

"Obviously location is not a factor in getting these contracts," Paik told the Hanscom area selectmen. "Proximity is not what drives it."

A study done in September for the Defense Technology Initiative focuses less on the defense contracts themselves and more on the jobs they generate. The study, done by the University of Massachusetts' Donahue Institute, estimates that the military contracts generate nearly 10,000 jobs. In addition, the study said, there are 4,150 military and civilian employees on the **base** who earn \$342 million a year.

The study estimates that those 14,150 residents generate \$1.6 billion and 17,000 jobs for the local economy by spending money on things like cars, homes, and shopping.

All told, with jobs, military contracts, and indirect spending factored in, the study says Hanscom's **closure** would take away \$3 billion and 30,220 jobs. The study also estimates that if the Army's Soldier Systems Center in Natick closed, \$254 million and 3,000 jobs would be lost, which has led state officials, including Romney and Kennedy, to claim that closing Massachusetts' military **bases** would take \$3.3 billion and 33,000 jobs from the state's economy.

The study does not, however, account for development potential of the site if the **base** closes. In some cases, communities that have lost military **bases** ended up better off in the long run. Cort C. Boulanger, spokesman for the Massachusetts Defense Technology Initiative, which commissioned the UMass report, stood by the \$3 billion figure as "an accurate representation of the economic impact," but he also said that it was just an estimate.

"But regardless of this report or that report, we know there's a significant economic impact here, and it will have a profound effect on the local defense technology industry," Boulanger said in an interview last week.

Michael D. Goodman, an author of the UMass study, declined to comment specifically on Paik's analysis, but he said that by not considering how many jobs would be lost, Paik is underestimating the economic impact.

"We did four months of intensive work, compiled dozens of interviews, and we obtained information from both military **bases**," Goodman said. "I think we're talking about an apples to oranges comparison here, and obviously we stand behind our analysis."

Some local officials have suggested that in the long run, it won't matter what the estimates say.

"If it turns out that someone overestimated to make the case for keeping the **base**, so be it. So what?" said Sheldon Moll, a Bedford selectman and a member of the area officials group. "I'm just as concerned about job loss, whether it's \$3 billion or \$2 billion or \$200,000."